

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 1418

E.O. 11652: XGDS 1

TAGS: PARM, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET VIEWS ON BANNING NEW WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

1. AUSTRALIAN AMBASSADOR PLIMSOLL RECENTLY SPOKE WITH VIKTOR ISRAELYAN, CHIEF OF THE SOVIET MFA'S INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION, ABOUT THE SOVIET PROPOSAL TO BAN THE DEVELOPMENT OF NEW WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION. ISRAELYAN SAID THAT THE USSR DID NOT WISH TO BE SPECIFIC, BUT THAT CERTAIN POSSIBILITIES WOULD BE OBVIOUS TO SCIENTISTS IN ANY COUNTRY. HE MENTIONED "RADIOLOGICAL DEVELOPMENTS AND LASTERS AND BINAR GAS," BUT SAID THAT OTHERS MIGHT EMERGE IN DISCUSSION.

2. ISRAELYAN ALSO SAID THAT MODIFICATION OF EXISTING WEAPONS SYSTEMS SOMETIMES RESULTED IN VIRTUALLY NEW WEAPONS, COMPARING MODERN NUCLEAR WEAPONS WITH THOSE OF 1945, AND MENTIONING THE TRIDENT AS "ALMOST INCONVEIVABLE" 30 YEARS AGO. THE DANGEROUS CONSEQUENCE OF POSSIBLE MAJOR SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENTS SHOULD BE TACKLED NOW, SAID ISRAELYAN, AND ANY COUNTRY SHOULD BE ABLE TO PROPOSE DISCUSSION OF ANY

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POTENTIAL DEVELOPMENT BEFORE THE SITUATION GOT OUT OF

HAND.

3. TO PLIMSOLL'S QUESTION ON THE NEED FOR INSPECTION AND VERIFICATION, ISRAELYAN SAID THAT FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONS THOSE MATTERS WERE MINOR COMPARED TO WHAT THEY WOULD BE FOR SOME OF THE OTHER POSSIBLE DEVELOPMENTS. BUT THEY HAD TO BE TACKLED AND WOULD TAKE TIME TO SOLVE. THE PROBLEMS WERE NOT AN EXCUSE FOR DEFERRING DISCUSSION. HE SAID BACTERIOLOGICAL WARFARE HAD BEEN COVERED SEPARATELY AND HE HOPED AGREEMENT ON NUCLEAR WARFARE COULD ALSO BE REACHED EARLIER THAN ON SOME OF THE NEW WEAPONS COVERED BY THIS PROPOSAL.

STOESSEL

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